

# Serve Wisconsin

Annual Report  
2015-2016 Program Year



Celebrating the hard work and impact of over 850 AmeriCorps members serving throughout Wisconsin during the 2015-2016 program year.





**SCOTT WALKER**  
**OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR**  
**STATE OF WISCONSIN**

P.O. Box 7863  
MADISON, WI 53707

February 3, 2017

Dear AmeriCorps Members and Supporters:

Congratulations to the 890 AmeriCorps Members who completed nearly one million hours of service on behalf of the residents of Wisconsin!

Due to your efforts, over 5,000 students improved their academic performance, 2,850 homeless youth received needed support and 238 low-income students enrolled in college. While this is an impressive list, it represents only a part of the impressive achievements detailed in this report of what AmeriCorps members accomplished throughout Wisconsin in one year.

AmeriCorps members receive a valuable service as well. AmeriCorps places young adults into intensive service positions where they learn valuable work skills, earn money for education, and develop an appreciation for citizenship.

The nonprofits, schools, public agencies, and community and faith-based groups that host AmeriCorps members deserve our thanks and praise. Your service to those in need in Wisconsin and the development of the next generation of leaders is commendable.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Scott Walker".

Scott Walker  
Governor



# 2015-2016 Impact of Serve Wisconsin AmeriCorps Members



890 AmeriCorps members served across the state of Wisconsin

Providing over 940,700 hours of service to local communities



## Because of Serve Wisconsin's AmeriCorps members:



8,564 youth received environmental education



8,430 youth received nutrition education



5,266 students improved their academics



3,830 individuals received disaster preparedness services



3,687 homeless youth returned home or to a safe alternative



238 low-income students enrolled in college



211 veterans & their family members received assistance with transitioning from military to civilian life



16,143 community volunteers were empowered & provided over 190,850 volunteer hours



# Highlights of the 2015-2016 Program Year

## 2015 Opening Ceremony

Over 500 attendees gathered at the Alliant Energy Center on October 16, 2015. Members spent the morning listening to speeches from Senator Tammy Baldwin, Amanda Panciera of City Year Milwaukee, MacArthur Antigua of Public Allies and Mark Denning. The Honorable Tommy G. Thompson delivered the keynote address and led the reading of the AmeriCorps Pledge. After talking about service for a morning, members slapped on hairnets and gloves and proceeded to package over 110,000 meals that were donated to Second Harvest Foodbank of Southern Wisconsin. The meals were later distributed to food pantries and other food distribution sites in communities throughout southern Wisconsin.



## 2016 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service

Wisconsin AmeriCorps members across the state participated in the 2016 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service on January 18. The 2016 MLK Day of Service inspired hundreds of thousands of Americans to come together to serve their community. Citizens in all 50 states delivered meals, refurbished schools and community centers, and collected food and clothing. Volunteers also recruited mentors, supported job-seekers, built homes and provided other services for veterans and military families and helped citizens improve their financial literacy skills.





## 2016 Mayor & County Recognition Day

Serve Wisconsin's partnership with the local Corporation State Office on Mayor and County Recognition Day for National Service continued to prove successful in coordinating targeted outreach to elected officials, resulting in 44 committed mayor and county officials. Serve Wisconsin took a lead role in organizing the MCRD event in Dane County that boasted a group of nearly 100 national service participants. The event included a ceremony recognizing the positive effect of national service in our community with participants sharing their diverse service impact stories. Current national service participants packaged eggs and labeled applesauce at Second Harvest Foodbank of Southern Wisconsin, necessary steps to get the food to those in need.

These activities are part of a national bipartisan effort to recognize the positive impact of national service, thank those who serve and encourage citizens to give back. "I am proud to be working with Madison and Dane County as we continue to strengthen communities through national service," said Wendy Spencer, CEO of the Corporation for National and Community Service. "County officials and mayors are leaders who get things done. They know first-hand the value of national service in tackling local problems."



## Bad River Tribal Nation Emergency Response

In July 2016, the Bad River Tribal Nation experienced historic flooding. AmeriCorps programs were quick to respond to the disaster. Marshfield Clinic Research Foundation coordinated the efforts to engage members from four AmeriCorps programs as well as additional volunteers. Over 600 hours were served in four days. Volunteers assisted in the delivering of 1,000 cases of water and thousands of meals, supported clean-up efforts on Tribal Pow Wow Grounds and managed the Bad River Flood Recovery Center.





# 2016 Governor's Service Recognition

An annual highlight of our year is honoring the extraordinary individuals and organizations that through their generous service make Wisconsin better for all of us.

In 2016 we were proud to present the Governors Service Recognition awards to:

## **The AmeriCorps Outreach Team of the Runaway & Homeless Youth Service, Boys & Girls Clubs of the Fox Valley**

The AmeriCorps Outreach Team works to prevent youth from running away or becoming homeless by providing direct support services such as street outreach, family support and a 24 hour crisis intervention hotline.

### **Peter Drews, Playworks, Milwaukee**

As an AmeriCorps member, recess rock star, "Coach Peter," leads 19 classes at Hopkins Lloyd Community School in Milwaukee where he teaches important social and emotional skills and games that will be played at recess to increase the feeling of community in the classroom.

### **Jennifer Dolan, University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension, Portage County**

As an AmeriCorps VISTA, Jennifer has served tirelessly to address community needs related to hunger and poverty issues.

### **Western Dairyland RSVP Team**

The Western Dairyland Retired and Senior Volunteer Program has enhanced the community's ability to address issues of food insecurity, independent living services for older adults and the disabled, poverty, and veterans' transportation needs.

### **Art Butterworth, Roger Christians, Chuck Sans Cainte, Monty Gilbertson and Dan Leaver: The Handyman Team of the Friends of Coulee Region RSVP, Inc.**

This unique team shares their time, skills, and expertise for no charge, assisting individuals by making homes accessible, safe, and doing many other home repairs that would otherwise go undone.

### **Bonnie Andrews, Volunteer Center Milwaukee**

Bonnie's important work with Volunteer Centers and the Service Enterprise Initiative has made a sizable impact in promoting, supporting, and increasing effective volunteerism for positive community impact throughout the state.

### **Leslie Ann Howard**

Leslie was honored as the Marty Stein Friend of National Service Exemplary Supporter for her support of the United Way of Dane County and the Schools of Hope and Achievement Connections AmeriCorps programs. Over the past 20 years, Leslie has championed the call for the community to come together to reduce the racial achievement gap, embodying the philosophy of the late Marty Stein.



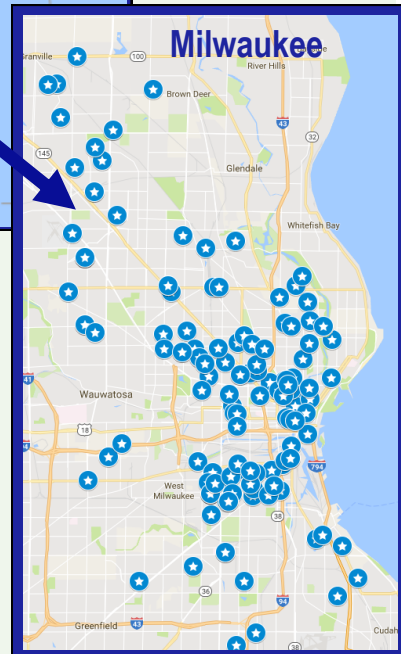
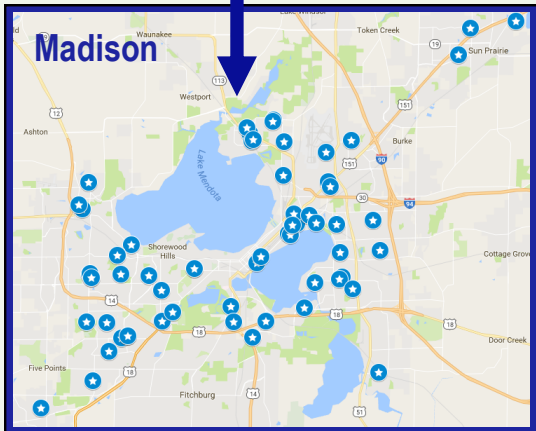
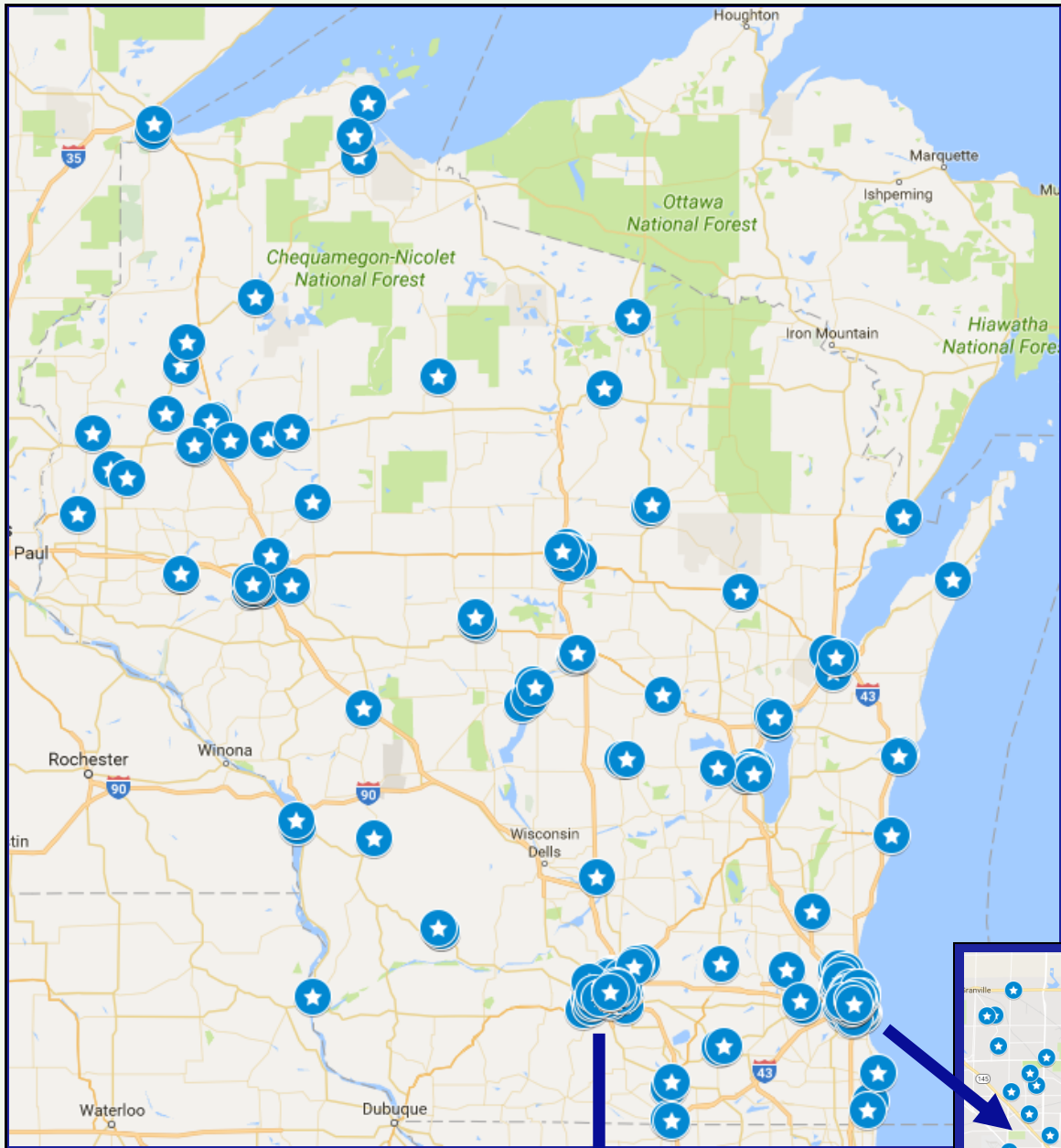
**Do you want to join in on the fun?**

**Do you want to help Wisconsin communities?**

Visit [www.servewisconsin.wi.gov](http://www.servewisconsin.wi.gov) to find out how you can get involved with AmeriCorps in Wisconsin.



890 AmeriCorps members served throughout the state of Wisconsin  
at 319 program sites in 69 cities.





# 2015-2016 AmeriCorps State Programs

25 Wisconsin programs received over \$6 million in funding from the Corporation for National and Community Service



## Boys & Girls Club of Barron County - Member Afterschool Plan Portfolios (MAPP)

20 AmeriCorps members serve as paraeducators, program coordinators and nutrition educators to Boys & Girls Club members.



## Boys & Girls Club of Greater Milwaukee - Spheres of Proud Achievement in Reading for Kids (SPARK), Camp Whitcomb, Mason Environmental Education Initiative & Arts Initiative

SPARK– 44 AmeriCorps members provide tutoring sessions and small group reading activities to students in grades K-3 in order to improve literacy.

Camp Whitcomb/Mason Environmental Initiative– 21 AmeriCorps members create, implement and lead youth through environmental education lessons and activities.

Arts Initiative– 5 AmeriCorps members develop, manage and implement a comprehensive art program and serve youth ages 6-18 in visual and performing arts in after school club facilities.



## Boys & Girls Club of Greater Milwaukee - Summer Slide Prevention, Kinder Academy, Graduation Plus

Summer Slide Prevention– 9 AmeriCorps members lead lessons with literacy and math concepts embedded to intellectually engaged kids, ages 7-9, over the summer.

Kinder Academy– 10 AmeriCorps members lead group activities for kids entering kindergarten teaching basic skills and concepts needed to begin school, ready to learn.

Graduation Plus– 6 AmeriCorps members lead tutoring, academic advising and college preparation activities for high school students who display indicators of high academic risk for failure.



## College Possible - Milwaukee

30 AmeriCorps members provide intensive coaching and support to 800 low-income high school and 1,200 college students in order to make college admission and success possible.



## Dane County Department of Human Services - Partners for After School Success (PASS)

35 AmeriCorps Members are placed in predominately low-income or resource scarce communities in order to enhance the academic achievement and school engagement of middle and high school youth through positive relationships, literacy tutoring, extended learning programs and volunteer service.



## Easter Seals Wisconsin

53 AmeriCorps members provide intensive personal care and lead or facilitate therapeutic recreation activities for individuals with disabilities and their families at Camp Wawbeek and Respite Camp. AmeriCorps members also provide therapeutic recreation activities for veterans and their family members at Veteran Family Camps.





### Indianhead Community Action Agency - Fresh Start Program

20 AmeriCorps members build new, affordable, energy efficient homes in rural NW Wisconsin communities to be sold or rented to first-time, lower-income individuals or families. Members are provided the opportunity to earn their high school diploma or HSED and receive basic skills instruction.



### Marshfield Clinic Research Foundation - Afterschool

30 AmeriCorps members provide support to afterschool programs through promoting academic success, personal/social development and healthy active living for youth ages 8-18.



### Marshfield Clinic Research Foundation - Volunteer Wisconsin

45 AmeriCorps members are placed in non-profits across the state to increase their capacity to effectively engage and utilize volunteers.



### Milwaukee Christian Center - Youthbuild (Fresh Start Program)

23 AmeriCorps members make a tangible impact on their community through the construction of affordable, energy-efficient housing and accessible home modifications, while gaining job and leadership skills, improving their education and developing community through service.



### Mount Mary University Urban Education Fellows

30 AmeriCorps members serve as full-time teachers to over 800 students in 10-15 partner schools while enrolling in graduate coursework and/ or participating in professional development activities.



### North Central Community Action Program

39 AmeriCorps members provide direct services to youth and their families as mentors and tutors during and after school. Members serve elementary, middle school, high school and adult learners.



### Public Allies Milwaukee

45 AmeriCorps members work on service projects that enhance and expand the capacity of nonprofit organizations to deliver critical direct services to Milwaukee residents.



### Renewal Unlimited, Inc. - Fresh Start Program

36 AmeriCorps members construct two single family homes that are sold to low- and moderate-income families. While working on the houses, they develop educational skills, pre-employment skills, job skills, independent living skills and leadership skills.



### Teach for America - Milwaukee

120 AmeriCorps members lead classrooms across the city while growing and strengthening the movement for educational equality and excellence.



### United Way of Dane County - Achievement Connections

20 AmeriCorps members tutor high school students in math and leverage additional volunteers to provide tutoring with the goal of increasing the number of students who pass Algebra by 10th grade.



### United Way of Dame County - Schools of Hope

26 AmeriCorps members work with school staff to increase the academic performance of students of color and those from low-income families through literacy tutoring. Members also work as coordinators for community volunteer tutors.



### University of Wisconsin - Eau Claire ECLIPSE

45 AmeriCorps members provide one-on-one interventions to 3-5 year old children who are at risk and/or from low income families in order to help them grow in the areas of language, literacy, social interaction and initiative skills.



### University of Wisconsin - Oshkosh Vet Corps

22 AmeriCorps members are placed in a variety of local non-profit organizations where they help to support the organizations' missions while acting as a key resource for veterans and military families with the objective of including more veteran volunteers in community service.



### Western Dairyland EOC, Inc. - Fresh Start Program

20 AmeriCorps members construct new homes for income-eligible families in the local community and do owner-occupied rehab while working on achieving high school diplomas/HSEDs, developing career goals, improving self-esteem and alleviating barriers to economic self-sufficiency.



### Wisconsin Association for Homeless and Runaway Services

35 AmeriCorps members provide street outreach services to homeless youth and respond to referrals from police departments, schools and other youth-serving agencies.



### Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection - Farm to School

30 AmeriCorps members leverage 500 community volunteers to implement farm to school strategies in 16 high-need Wisconsin communities to provide students healthy local foods.



### Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction - Play and Read

24 AmeriCorps members are placed in 7 public libraries throughout southern Wisconsin in order to build on children's pre-existing literacies by facilitating educational play groups for 3- and 4-year-old children.



### Wisconsin Emergency Management - ReadyWisconsin AmeriCorps Disaster Preparedness Project

20 AmeriCorps members conduct emergency volunteer management capacity building, disaster preparedness outreach and disaster services in the communities they serve.



### Wisconsin Primary Healthcare Association - Wisconsin HealthCorps

20 AmeriCorps members are placed in community health centers, public health departments and health focused non-profits in order to serve as patient navigators, health educators and community outreach specialists.



# 2015-2016 Member Reflections

## *Time of Your Life by Kathryn Bach*

### **AmeriCorps Member with Easter Seals Wisconsin AmeriCorps Partnership**

"We are going to win the lottery and give all of it to camp because this place is AWESOME!" – two of my campers at Wawbeek.

Quite honestly, prior to arriving at camp I thought this term of service would be more similar to a normal job. After a few weeks into the summer, I began realizing my expectations were extremely incorrect. This term of service was changing me.

Everyone at camp, regardless of his or her awareness, was teaching me something. Specifically, the campers showed me the power of openness and authenticity.

The campers' willingness to show me so clearly who they were invited me to reciprocate the openness, which resulted in beautiful connections. One specific camper portrays this idea perfectly. I was the only counselor in a group of three young men. One of the three was the first camper to check in on that hectic Sunday afternoon. He was clearly nervous to be at camp and initially seemed distant and removed. He only wanted to walk around by himself or lay in bed. I thought to myself this week would challenge me. However, each day seemed to get easier as we began to connect. He opened up to me and allowed me to understand why he felt and acted the way he did. On Wednesday, he was feeling upset and wanted to escape the loud and energetic Olympic Games program. We walked toward the basketball hoops and I threw a basketball in his direction. He held it but refused to do anything more with it. After much encouragement, he finally took a shot at the hoop. The first shot he'd taken in six years.

Moments like these were a regular occurrence at Camp Wawbeek. There were many nights I thought to myself that my heart couldn't feel more joy than it already had. But once again, I was wrong.



## **Selection from *Spreading the Light* by Megan Miller,**

### **AmeriCorps Member with Play and Read**

I feel utterly transformed by this experience. It has given me hope that I can make real change for the better in my community without sacrificing my role as a mother.

I feel empowered and want to use this opportunity to empower others to offer as many play groups as possible throughout the community in order to nurture Beloit children and to instill within them confidence and the love of reading. I now see a

brighter future for her community. I hope to continue to serve into the following year to make sure the program is strong enough to sustain itself. Now that I have had the opportunity to serve with AmeriCorps Play and Read, I hope to be a lifelong library volunteer and I am considering serving for the local city council to make sure the program is well supported. I have also connected with the Second Harvest Food network as part of my outreach and I am finding great joy in volunteering every week at the local food bank with my two daughters as well as recruiting other volunteers. This experience has illuminated life altering ways for me to serve my community, and I feel almost reborn after feeling as though my role in the community was snuffed out by my desire to be an active and attentive mother to my two children. Thank you for this amazing opportunity.



## *All in a Year by Holly Wickham*

### **AmeriCorps Member with College Possible Milwaukee**

I began my second term of service apprehensively. I had heard that corps members tend to get passion fatigue and burn out in their second year of dedication to low-income students pursuing college degrees. After my first year, I knew how exhausting working with high school seniors can be. I understood how taxing and emotional it can be to work with forty students who face seemingly insurmountable obstacles every day. I was prepared for a tough year, but you can never really prepare for a year with our students.



We had a lot of highs and lows in my cohort of 32 Vincent High School students. Together we struggled and celebrated through the year. College acceptance letters were sent to homes students had been evicted from weeks earlier. One student got married, and another incarcerated. A pregnancy started a life, then a car crash ended another. Scholarships won and family members lost. All of this, we went through it together.

Two years ago when I began at College Possible, I wasn't sure what I wanted to do with my life. Now I can say with confidence that what I want to do is to serve my community. I want to make higher education accessible to everyone no matter their background. After my second term of service, I'm not burned out and I'm not passion fatigued. There were times when my spirits were dimmed but never extinguished. If anything, my second year of service has strengthened my resolve to continue in our mission. I'm ready to keep serving for a long time.

## *Public Allies Milwaukee by Milagro Jones*

### **AmeriCorps Member with Public Allies Milwaukee**

The United States of America was founded upon the ideal that every person despite their differences is created equal. Throughout the Nation's great history there have been many opportunities for those at a disadvantage to rise above their circumstances and prove that this country truly deserves to be called The Land of Opportunity. Thanks to my service as an AmeriCorps member and Public Ally I can count myself among their ranks today.



The Milwaukee Continuum of Care (CoC) have been working tirelessly to end homelessness in the United States of America throughout my life. Unbeknownst to them I was experiencing homelessness and the traumas involved with a homeless lifestyle during that time. Due to their work a network was created that gave me safe harbor and allowed me to make it through seemingly insurmountable obstacles and arrive at the meeting table within the Milwaukee CoC.

I brought my unique experiences to the table and was able to benefit the structure they were already working to create and sustain. The inside perspective that I contributed impacted how the CoC evaluated the system and provided greater details in how the system actually operated for the consumer. I gave the agencies within the CoC an opportunity to collaborate to a greater extent with a member of the population that they serve. I created a membership structure within the CoC that guarantees homeless and formerly homeless individuals will never have to pay for the benefits of membership. My service and my impact are a two way street just like the way agencies within the CoC hold each other accountable. I will forever be indebted to the CoC and thanks to AmeriCorps I can proudly say I have made a step towards paying off that debt through the service I provide as a Public Ally. Below is a short poem that I wrote and I wanted to share.

#### *Dirt Cheap*

My roots go deep like a buried dream in your sleep,  
But my arms are outstretched like a rose from concrete,  
And you'd never think I'd even make it underneath the streets,  
That's the reason why my favorite saying is "dirt cheap,"  
You never know the value of soil until it's poisoned,  
Or you plant a seed and it won't grow due to soil erosion,  
I'm a miracle flower that grows while the ground is frozen,  
I'm a diamond in the dirt but wash this dirt off and it's Golden.



## Goodbye and Thank You Tom Devine



Tom Devine gave over 18 years of leadership to Serve Wisconsin making Wisconsin one of the top states in volunteerism and in AmeriCorps funding. He truly believes in the power of individuals helping make communities strong.

For 18 years, he navigated the ever-changing grant landscape and provided funding foresight to ensure that Wisconsin, year after year, received the resources needed to strengthen communities and increase volunteerism. Tom is a passionate and determined leader who is always willing to stand up for what he believes is right. Those familiar with him know he is not afraid to push the boundaries, to be the bulldog in the room; but he did so with a soft heart and true belief in the great work that can be done through national service. With each challenge, Tom was always there to suggest a creative and effective strategy.



Always recognizing the value of collaboration, he was very engaged in America's Service Commissions (ASC) and was often found on the phone with other state commission directors and Corporation for National Community Service (CNCS) staff providing his opinions, guidance and experience. CNCS regularly directed new state executive directors to Tom for guidance. He would freely share the tools Serve Wisconsin used to manage programs in the interest of transparency and to help other state commissions to be as strong as they could.



## Wisconsin State Commission

Serve Wisconsin, the Wisconsin National and Community Service Board, was established January 28, 1994, by Governor Tommy G. Thompson under Executive Order "to encourage community service and volunteer participation as a means of community and state problem-solving; to promote and support voluntary citizen involvement in government and private programs throughout the state; to develop a long-term vision and plan of action for community service initiatives in Wisconsin; and to serve as the state's liaison to national and state organizations which support its mission."

Serve Wisconsin is governed by a 21-member citizen body appointed by the Governor to support community service and volunteerism. Federal AmeriCorps resources from the Corporation for National and Community Service are awarded to organizations seeking to deliver services through an evidence-based approach to creating community solutions.



## Serve Wisconsin

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[www.servewisconsin.wi.gov](http://www.servewisconsin.wi.gov)

[volunteerwisconsin.org](http://volunteerwisconsin.org)

## Serve Wisconsin Staff:

### Jeanne Duffy

Executive Director

### Steven Yule

Senior Program Officer

### Jessica Kessler

Program Officer

### Amy Porter

Program Officer

### Casey Sweeney

Program Officer

### Daria Rydzak

Community Engagement Specialist



## Serve Wisconsin

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Community-Based Agency Representative

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Board Vice Chair

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Youth Development Representative

#### Jane Moore

Youth Development Representative

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Promoting Older Adult Volunteerism

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Learn how to apply at [www.servewisconsin.wi.gov](http://www.servewisconsin.wi.gov)!